



Homeland Security

FY 2015 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)

Overview

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is an important component of the larger, coordinated effort to strengthen the Nation's overall level of preparedness and ability to respond to fire and related hazards. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2001, the AFG Program has provided approximately \$6.4 billion in grants to first-responder organizations to obtain much needed emergency response equipment, personal protective equipment, firefighting and emergency vehicles, and training. During FY 2015, the AFG will award another \$306 million to first-responder organizations that need support to improve their capability to respond to fires and emergencies of all types.

In Fiscal Year 2015, FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program will award approximately \$306 million directly to fire departments and non-affiliated EMS organizations to enhance their response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public and emergency response personnel with respect to fire and all other hazards.

Purpose

The purpose of the AFG Program is to award grants directly to fire departments, non-affiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations (EMS organizations that are not affiliated with a hospital, and state fire training academies to enhance their ability to protect the health and safety of the public, as well as that of first-responder personnel). Using a competitive process that is overseen by fire service subject matter experts, grants are awarded to applicants whose requests best address the priorities of the AFG Program.

Funding

The AFG Program will award approximately \$306 million in competitive grants to fire departments, non-affiliated EMS organizations, and state fire training academies during FY 2015. Funding for vehicles is limited to 25 percent of the total FY 2015 AFG Program appropriation. No less than 3.5 percent of appropriated funds must be awarded for EMS equipment and training grants for both fire-department-based and non-affiliated EMS organizations.

Eligibility

Only fire departments, non-affiliated EMS organizations and state fire training academies are eligible to apply for funding. Organizations must operate in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or Puerto Rico.

- A “fire department” is defined as an agency or organization that has a formally recognized arrangement with a State, territory, local or tribal authority (city, county, parish, fire district, township, town, or other governing body) to provide fire suppression to a population within a fixed geographical area on a first-due basis.
- A “non-affiliated EMS organization” is defined as a public or private nonprofit EMS organization that provides direct emergency medical services, including medical transport, to a specific geographic area on a first-due basis, but which is not affiliated with a hospital and does not serve a geographic area where such services are provided adequately by a fire department or another primary non-affiliated EMS agency.
- A “State Fire Training Academy” is defined as the primary state fire training academy, agency, or institution, for each state; which provides “entity-wide” delivery of fire training (and emergency medical services training if applicable) as specified by legislative authorization, by general statutory authorization or charter, or is ad-hoc in nature with the general acceptance of the fire service.

Program Highlights

The AFG Program funds fire departments, non-affiliated EMS organizations and state fire training academies. Under the FY 2015 AFG program, interested organizations are eligible to submit up to three applications under the followings categories:

Operations and Safety:

- Grant projects funded include professional training, wellness and fitness programs equipment, personal protective equipment, modifications to facilities, and supplies that support firefighting and non-affiliated EMS operations and safety.

Vehicle Acquisition: Fire Departments and non-affiliated EMS Organizations

- Eligible apparatus included, but are not limited to: pumpers, aerials, brush trucks, tankers/tenders, rescue vehicles, ambulances

Regional Grants:

- Regional projects in which multiple organizations (Fire and/or non-affiliated EMS) serving more than one local jurisdiction would benefit directly from the activities requested with grant funds.

State Fire Training Academies

- State fire training academies are eligible to apply for critically needed resources to protect the public, to train emergency personnel, and to foster interoperability and support community resilience.

Evaluation Criteria

AFG funding priorities differ for fire departments, non-affiliated EMS organizations, and state fire training academies. The funding priorities and evaluation criteria are developed from recommendations provided by a criteria development panel, composed of fire service professionals representing the major fire service organizations.

Based on the input received, the FY 2015 AFG priorities remain largely unchanged from FY 2014.

All submitted applications are ranked based on the substance of the application, relative to the established funding priorities.

Applications that score the highest and are determined to be in the “competitive range” will undergo further evaluation by a panel of peers, from the fire service and non-affiliated EMS organizations.

Applications that are considered for award will undergo an extensive technical review prior to an award offer.

On December 26, 2014, DHS adopted the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 that establish a uniform set of mandatory requirements for federal awards to non-federal entities.

AFG Program Resources

For additional information on the FY 2015 AFG program please visit our web site at:
<http://www.fema.gov/assistance-firefighters-grant>.

You may also contact the AFG Program Help Desk by calling 1-866-274-0960 or via email at firegrants@dhs.gov

Note: \$340 million is the FY 2015 appropriation for the AFG initiative. From this appropriation, \$34 million is allocated to fund the FY 2015 Fire Prevention & Safety Grant Program.